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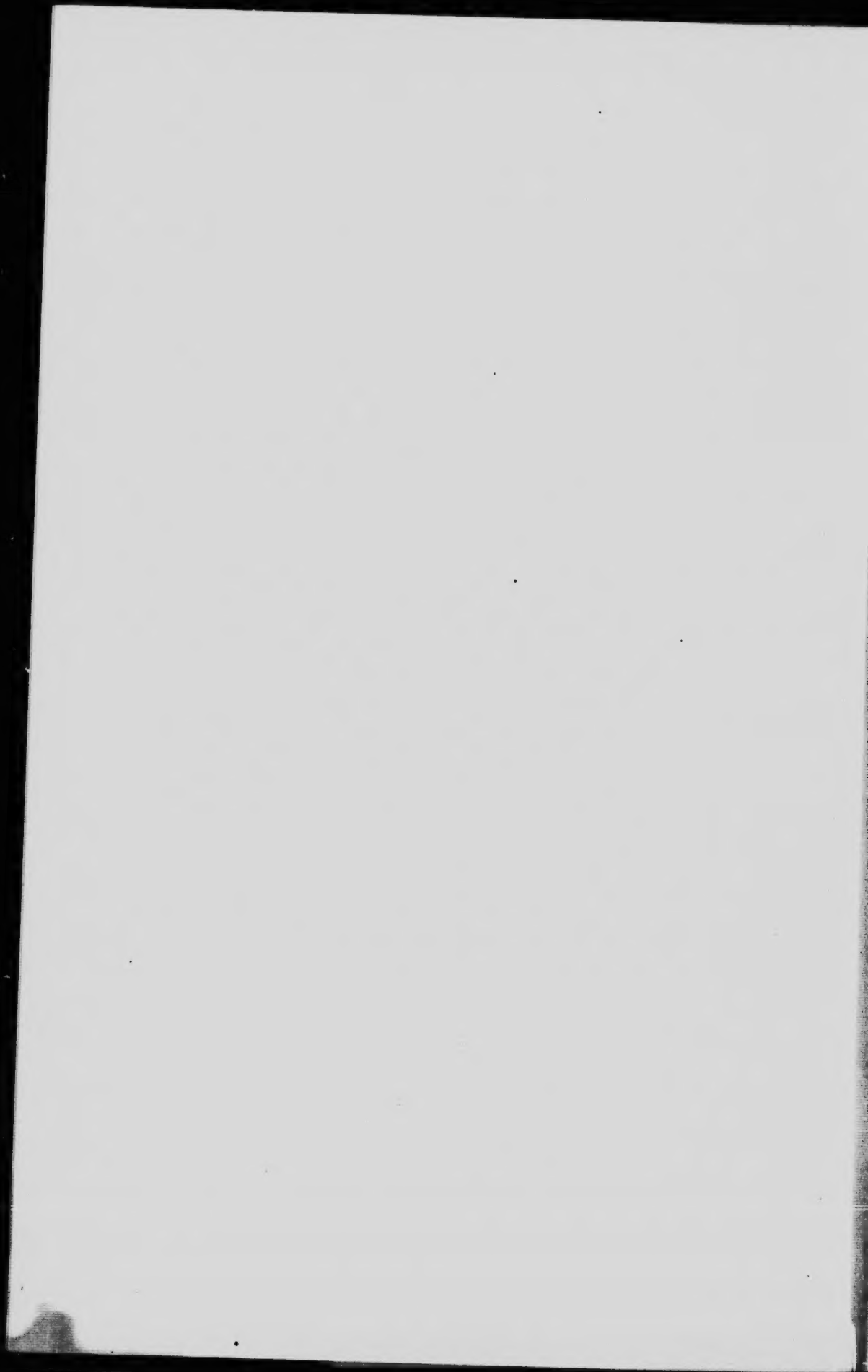
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THE RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT

and its Consequences

As viewed
from the Nationalist standpoint.

— BY —

HENRI BOURASSA

Chief-Editor of "Le Devoir"

MONTREAL.
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TO THE ENGLISH SPEAKING READER

This pamphlet is a literal translation of seven articles published in "Le Devoir", from January 31st to February 7th. A few preliminary and closing sentences, in each article, and some personal references to politicians have been cut out—as being of mere passing interest. The rest I have kept in full. The reading of it, in pamphlet form, is undoubtedly made rather heavy by repetitions and developments,—a natural result of the broken process of daily publication. In spite of that inconvenience, and from motives which, I hope, may commend themselves to fair-minded people, I thought it better to make no alterations in the original text.

My object in publishing an English version of this hurried piece of work, is not to bring any new argument for or against the Taft-Fielding agreement. Enough words, written or spoken, are being poured on that subject. But the occasion seems proper to show the English-speaking public in what language, with what arguments, and upon what ground the Nationalists carry on their campaign.

In writing those articles, I was drawn into discussing, from the standpoint of nationalism, nearly the whole range of imperial relations.

Some Anglo-Canadians, many of them perhaps, may not agree with me. But will any sensible Canadian, of any race or creed, contend that these are unreasonable views, tending to sectionalism, to race-hatred, to interprovincial strifes? I do not think so.

Now, these articles are strictly in accord with the line of argument we have followed all along, whether we discussed the navy or the language question, separate schools or immigration.

More heated expressions may have been used, now and then, by some of our sympathisers. Incidents of that nature are unavoidable in public discussion or political agitation. But none of those exaggerated statements, in the nationalist propaganda, have come near rivalling the wild talk of liberal or conservative extremists, at all time, in every Province of Canada. Why should Quebec Nationalism and its leaders be held more strictly responsible for errors of that kind, than Conservatism or Liberalism and their respective leaders?

Nationalism in Quebec—in Drummond and Arthabaska, as anywhere else—has been fostered as a doctrine purely and wholly Canadian, as proper for English or Irish as for French electors. As such it will go on asserting itself. Its leaders and adherents have never appealed to racial, religious or sectional prejudices. And I defy any one to bring good evidence to the contrary.

The legend of sectionalism was created by politicians disturbed in their sweet rest by our activity. They had practically become masters of the province and nearly killed all opposition, even stifled all free discussion. Men to whom party success and the enjoyment of office are everything, were naturally enraged at our appeals to the spirit of independence of the people, at our denunciations of public rascality and acts of misgovernment. They therefore thought it good policy to try and get us killed by calling us mad. They endeavoured first to make us appear, in the eyes of the good, peace-loving Canadian farmer, as a band of dangerous demagogues. That part of the game is played out. Then they tried, not without success, to isolate us from the English-speaking community, by

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falsely showing Nationalism as a movement to upset British institutions, to set race against race, creed against creed, province against province.

To reach their end, they resorted to misquotations, distortion and forgery. A federal minister of the Crown, Mr. Brodeur, has gone to the point of reading, in the House of Commons, copious extracts from newspaper articles, speech reports, dispatches, etc., and even showing cartoons, all purported to be taken from "Le Devoir" and "Le Nationaliste", but found out, afterwards, to have been published in ministerial organs.

Mr. Brodeur's falsehood was, to his shame, shown before the House and the country. Hundreds of people—parliamentarians, party followers, journalists—have used against us the same poisoned weapons; but, through lack of time, means or opportunity, we have been unable to expose them.

That kind of work has been going on systematically for months, not to say years. It has received, I am sorry to say, unexpected help from so-called independent or conservative English journals in Montreal, and from Montreal or Quebec correspondents of papers published in Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and elsewhere.

Now, I ask from any fair-minded man:—Which is more conducive to national discord? that a group of Canadians, honest and sincere, openly propound, in this free British country, their views upon any political problem? or that they be falsely accused, all over the land, of promoting racial or religious demagoguery?

If our doctrine is wrong, why not fight it with arguments instead of abuse, distortion and forgery?

Nationalists state frankly what they consider best for Canada. They seek for a common ground of agreement between all true Canadians. They think every British sub-

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ject, whether he be of English, French, Irish or foreign descent, is entitled to free speech and national cooperation. They believe that the best way to avoid racial and religious strifes is to give to every race and every creed the amplest measure of liberty. Why their own race and creed should not be entitled to the full benefit of that golden rule, they fail to see, and they claim their right in that respect.

The so-called liberals of to-day teach to the French Canadian that, in matters of national import, he must always submit, without discussion, to the English speaking majority, in order to keep a French premier in power. They now endeavour to enlist the influence of the Episcopate and the clergy, and even the intervention of Rome, in support of their navy policy. They then turn to the English-speaking and protestant majority, they pose as "broad-minded" Canadians, as "loyal" Britishers, and call for help against the "dangerous appeals" of the Nationalists to Race and Religion!

Which of the two is, after all, the safer?

The answers to those questions I leave confidently, with the opinions that follow, to the fair consideration of any Canadian of British descent. I simply request, that, before passing his judgment, the English-speaking reader cast away from his mind all preconceptions he may have imbibed from the adulterated food presented to him so far, under the false names of "Nationalism", or "Anti-British Feeling" in Quebec, or "Bourassa's Appeals to Prejudices."

Honest differences of opinion, held and expressed with a view to public good, should hurt nobody. They are wholesome. They constitute one of the most valuable assets of a free, progressive and public spirited nation.

HENRI BOURASSA,

Montreal, February, the 12th, 1911.

N. B.—To those who may wish for more information on the nationalist movement in Quebec, I strongly recommend the lecture of Mr. Olivar Asselin's pamphlet: "A Quebec view of Canadian Nationalism". They might also derive some information from two articles I wrote for the "Monthly", of London, Eng., in September and October 1902.

The Reciprocity Agreement

This Convention constitutes one of the gravest political problems that have engrossed for a long time the mind of the Canadian people. For various reasons, it should be carefully scrutinised. It will affect, for good or bad, the production, the transportation and the consumption of the numerous articles that come under its provisions. Above all, it may have far reaching consequences, both in the polity and the economy of the nation. Its nature, its range, and the reactions it may give rise to, are not easy to determine.

I have not the pretension of having grasped, in three days, and through various cares, all the complicated aspects of this vast problem.

To lay down the principles by which *Le Devoir* will be guided, and its final judgment determined, is my sole object, at present. A few observations will be added on the general aspects of the question and the position of the public men and parties called upon to solve the problem.

CANADA FIRST.

Exclusive care for Canadian interests should be the guiding thought of parliament in the consideration and solution of this vital problem.

In a question of this nature, the general and superior interests of Canada should predominate over the particu-

lar interests of classes of provinces; they should not be sacrificed to the sway of American industry and American avenues of trade; nor should they be subordinated to a false conception of imperial unity.

This is the time to say: CANADA FOR THE CANADIANS; and while saying it, not to sacrifice Canada either to the Americans or to the inhabitants of any other part of the Empire.

Such is the true nationalist doctrine. So we have preached it long before the publication of *Le Devoir*.

Let us now consider to what degree the agreement, in its whole, corresponds to that doctrine.

INTRINSIC VALUE OF THE CONVENTION

ITS EFFECT ON AGRICULTURE.

At first sight, I think, Messrs Fielding and Paterson cannot be charged with having, in the matter of duties on agricultural imports, sacrificed general interests to private or local exigencies.

To ascertain whether they have not erred in the opposite direction would be perhaps more to the point. The Prime Minister of British Columbia, Mr. McBride, has pointed out the danger which, in his opinion, threatens the fruit growing industry. Mr. Monk, in the well-guarded and able speech which he delivered at *Le Devoir's* banquet, has pleaded the very interesting case of the gardener. The distinguished member for Jacques-Cartier fears also that, under a régime of free exchange, the industry of butter and cheese in Canada will be handicapped by a more extensive shipment of cream to the United States.

If I am well informed, that apprehension would not be absolutely justified. The exportation of Canadian cream would have arisen precisely from the marked difference in

the American duties upon cream and dairy products. Therefore, the abolition of all duty would give back to the Canadian producer, maker and exporter of dairy products, the full advantage of cheaper labour and transportation. Freight charges, as is well known, decrease inasmuch as any article of trade is exported in its most complete state, as, in this instance, butter, cheese, or condensed milk.

Any how, these are matters of detail, which the debate in Parliament will help in making clear. Assuredly, men of good will, while agreeing on the general aspects of the measure, may be allowed to differ on several of those points.

But it may be granted at the outset, I think, that the agreement affords an ample measure of reciprocity, the application of which cannot but foster agriculture, and thereby benefit the vast majority of the Canadian people. And such advantage does not appear to be acquired at the expense of Canadian industry.

ITS EFFECT ON MANUFACTURES. FARM IMPLEMENTS

One of the causes through which any idea of reciprocity between the two countries had become more and more unpopular, not to say odious, was the general conviction, in Canada, that the Americans would never consent to a free exchange of farm produce or fish without getting in return a marked reduction of Canadian customs duties upon their manufactured goods.

That apprehension, I think, vanishes at even a superficial glance at the Convention.

One would rather be tempted to consider that the Canadian Government should have given more, at least on one point: the import duties upon agricultural implements and machinery.

The making of farm machinery is practically controlled by one firm, the Massey-Harris Co., a trust as powerful as any American concern. That great company successfully meets the competition of American manufactures in the markets of the world. That it could have resisted the same competition in its own Canadian market is therefore to be presumed.

Why did the Government rest content at reducing from 17½ to 15 per cent the import duty on the most expensive articles of that category? Why did they resist in that regard the pressing demand of the farmers from all provinces? Why did Mr. Fielding refuse to follow his own inclination, as he declared in the House on the 26th of January?

Should it be because one of the main shareholders and the managing director of the Massey-Harris Co. is the Honourable Mr. Jones, Senator, a bosom friend of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and, as rumour says, one of the generous subscribers to electoral funds and other charitable works of the ministerial party?

Let it be hoped that the Government will be anxious to wipe out even the shadow of favoritism, and will endeavour to amend the agreement by offering to the American Government a substantial reduction of the duties imposed upon the most important farm implements, in exchange, let us say, for the maintenance of the duties on garden products.

LUMBER, PULP, PAPER.

Free trade on lumber will give a strong impulse to that staple industry. It will be up to the Provincial governments to make use of that increase in trade to help Canadian capital and labour and encourage the settlement of the soil, while securing the conservation and methodical exploitation of the forest.

In Ontario, they have nearly done what is necessary in that regard. Let us hope that Mr. Gouin and his colleagues will at last open their eyes and make up their mind to effectuate a complete and methodical separation of the forest and the land fit for settlement. They should come to it the more willingly, because, thanks to the recent attitude of the Conservation Commission and the expressed opinion of the Forestry Convention, they could effect the reform without borrowing it directly from the Nationalist programme.

On the question of pulp and paper I agree entirely with the member for Jacques-Cartier. Our government should, I think, foster by all available means the making of paper in Canada. That industry is destined to become one of the most important and remunerative in our country. We have, in the provinces of New-Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, exceptional advantages: raw material, water-power and labour of unquestionable superiority.

But I wonder if, as in the case of the dairy industry, the natural laws of economy would not, under a régime of free-trade, operate with all their power, and drive the American paper-maker and his factory to Canada? Here the raw material can be had on the spot and manufactured to a finish, as paper; and thus useless cost of transportation could be saved, which, in the case of pulp-wood and fresh-made pulp, means an enormous economy.

On that point also, let us hope, will the discussion throw some light.

At any rate, it is but fair to note that, by the terms of the agreement, it does not appear that the situation will be modified and pulp and paper put on the free list, as long as the governments of Ontario and Quebec maintain their present regulations.

A despatch from Washington to the *Montreal Star*, dated January the 27th, stated that a large amount of money was being raised by the American opponents to the Convention in order to secure from the provinces the repeal of those regulations. Here is the text of that despatch:

"A large fund is now being raised to lobby at Quebec and Toronto to induce Sir Lomer Gouin and Sir James Whitney to remove the restrictions on pulp, and then the Canadian forests are ours, say the publishers."

Such a move of the part of the Americans will undoubtedly be sufficient to stop all further action in that regard. In fact, the door seems to have been closed on the Ontario side by Mr. Cochrane, Minister of Lands and Forests in Toronto, who immediately declared that the laws of his province would not be modified.

As far as I know, Messrs. Gouin and Allard have made no statement yet; but I am convinced that they will be no less firm in keeping their honour safe from the deep suspicions that would inevitably lie against them, in case the restrictions they imposed last year against the exportation of pulp wood were removed after so bold an attempt to bring them to terms.

WEST VERSUS EAST.

"The interests of the Eastern Provinces are sacrificed to Western exigencies":—such is the thought expressed by some of those who oppose the Convention. This might give occasion to recall "—opinion expressed, some years ago, by Mr. Monk, Mr. Argue, a few others and myself, against the overstocking of the great central plains of Canada by foreign elements. How disdainfully our warnings were then received by "men of weight"!

I do not insist upon it at present.

Now that the evil is done, its consequences must be looked upon with a clear-sighted serenity. It is not by stirring up the older provinces against that new and increasing force that the danger will be avoided. It is, on the contrary, by making to the people of the new provinces, reasonable concessions, compensated to the other provinces by equivalent advantages. Thus a true national sentiment may possibly be created and bind together all the various portions of Canada.

By a singular irony of fate, though in the logic of events, it has now become the part of those so often called "*narrow provincialists*" to preach the gospel of national concord to those who so long hid their selfish cupidity behind the noisy protestations of a so-called "*broadly Canadian and Imperial*" patriotism.

* * *

To sum up the first part of this study:—

On the whole, considering only the intrinsic value of the agreement, it appears to be conducive enough to the general interests of Canada to deserve the favourable attention of Parliament and of the independent press.

Without threatening our industries, it seems to offer substantial advantages to agriculture in all provinces.

A somewhat striking evidence in support of that double conclusion is the opposition manifested against the agreement among farmers in the United States, — which makes it likely that it is favourable to our own farming community, — while here, manufacturing interests seem to be very little concerned about it.

The most serious objections to the arrangement bear upon its ultimate consequences: American domination and the sacrifice of Imperial interests.

Let the search-light be now turned upon those two points successively.

AMERICAN INVASION

RECIPROCITY IN GENERAL.

Are Canadian interests, in consequence of the reciprocity arrangement, being subjected to American trade and industry? Are the national unity and the economical independence of Canada thereby threatened? Is the way opened to the political union of the two countries?

That such dangers arise from any measure of reciprocity between Canada and the United States is the contention of those who systematically oppose the agreement.

As an absolute proposition, it is not supported by any principle of economy; and it is formally contradicted by the history of Canada.

THE TREATY OF 1854.

The treaty of 1854 lasted twelve years.

In those fruitful years, the wounds of the rebellion of 1837 were healed; the basis and the working out of responsible government were secured; the last vestige of the domination exercised by the British proconsuls of the old Imperialistic school disappeared.

During that period of peace and prosperity, the various British Colonies of North America laid the foundation of the federal agreement and the Canadian nationality.

Those results were the more remarkable that a few years previous had witnessed the manifestation, in both Canadas, of a movement towards annexation to the United States. Who headed that movement? The ancestors of our Imperialists of to-day, believers in the commercial union of

the Empire, enraged at the recent abolition of British duties upon foreign corn and of the preference in favour of British and Colonial wheat.

The disloyal tendency was stifled by the treaty of 1854. And it may be rightly said, that in concluding that Convention, Lord Elgin strengthened Canadian autonomy and Imperial unity, just as, in breaking definitely with the tradition of his predecessors in the exercise of personal power, he had secured the loyalty of the French-Canadians and of the "rebels" of Upper Canada.

The treaty was terminated in 1866 by the action of the American Government.

Canada suffered greatly from the interruption of a régime through which she had prospered. But the inconveniences were not without compensation, since they forced upon the people of Canada the creation of new industries and a search for a broader scope of farming methods.

BOTH PARTIES FOR RECIPROCITY.

Nevertheless, a more or less extensive measure of reciprocity between the two countries remained the constant object of all our governments and political parties. This, I think, has been proven beyond doubt by the Finance Minister in the very able and interesting speech with which he supported the announcement of the terms of the Convention. Differences existed only as to the means of obtaining reciprocity and as to the extent of its scope in the way of free commercial exchanges.

Not only was the conservative party, as well as the liberal party, imbued with that object before the establishment of protection in 1879; but the fathers of the "National Policy"—Macdonald, Tilley, Tupper, Langevin—offered it to the Canadian people as the most effective means of bringing to life again the reciprocity abolished by the United States in 1866.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD ON RECIPROCITY.

In the Tariff law of 1879, Sir John A. Macdonald introduced, in black and white, a permanent offer of reciprocity covering almost the same ground as the present arrangement: the produce of the farm, of the forest and of the fisheries. And, in his last appeal to the people of Canada, in 1891, the great statesman solicited a new mandate by which he would be authorised to treat with the United States.

So that Mr. Monk was absolutely in the right when, almost in the opening of his master speech, at *Le Devoir's* banquet, he stated: "Let us remember, Sir John A. Macdonald always endeavoured to establish better relations with our neighbours, and his efforts have paved the way to the government of to-day"

In this as in several other instances, Mr. Monk, and even Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues, remain more faithful than Mr. Borden to the traditions of the Conservative party. This time again, as on many previous occasions, the leader of the opposition seems anxious to assert his personality and to prove that while he has, after an interval of ten years, officially succeeded to Macdonald, he has taken care not to be entangled in his principles, his traditions and his political genius.

In order to condemn, *on principle*, any treaty of reciprocity, one must first contend that Sir John A. Macdonald was neither a conservative nor a protectionist, that he was the enemy of the Empire and of the Canadian Confederation; and bring the true Conservatives and the Canadian people at large to accept that contention.

The task is heavy, for Mr. Borden, even with the help of Sir Hugh Graham and the young Tardes.

NATIONALISM IN ECONOMY.

We, Nationalists, have neither the advantage nor the inconvenience of being tied up by a party tradition. — And I rejoice in the fact.—From the start, we have looked upon that question of reciprocity, and the more general problems of free trade and protection, from the sole standpoint of the general interests of Canada.

We believe in the necessity of a protective tariff high enough to stimulate home industries, those especially that make use of home raw material. We even believe that it is better to go somewhat beyond the line of necessary protection than to sacrifice our industries and our consuming market to the American trusts. The first result of free trade might be a temporary reduction in prices. But, once the competition of Canadian production crushed down, the American producer would take a dire revenge, and recover, with a large interest, from the Canadian consumer, what he may have sacrificed at first with the sole purpose of becoming the absolute master of all the markets of Northern America.

On the other hand, we do not think that such measure of protection should be pressed to the point of inflicting upon Canada the same evil which preys upon the American people. We do not believe in allowing Canadian trusts to rise and to fatten, under the cover of patriotism and at the expense of consumers, just as their Yankee prototypes do on the other side of the line. For, as goes the energetic popular saying: "*Whether bitten by dog or bitch, the bite is no less painful*".

NATURAL CONDITIONS.

Moreover, the essential conditions of our economical situation cannot be ignored. The majority of the Canadian people live on the farm. Canada is above all a country of natural production: farming, forestry, mining and fish-

ing, and the industries derived therefrom. Ostentations as may be the manifestations and the banquets of their Association, manufacturers cannot bring us to believe that they are the whole of Canada, and that "the other fellow" counts for nothing.

The eight million Canadian producers and consumers are scattered alongside of a conventional boundary by which they are separated from nearly one hundred million human beings having, to a large extent, a temperament, habits and needs similar to their own. To prevent those two peoples making between themselves the local exchanges which are necessitated by the exigencies of such a peculiar condition of things, and to stop the general trade arising therefrom, is impossible and unreasonable.

• • •

To sum up: a measure of reciprocity, both broad and prudent, between Canada and the United States, is natural; it is in conformity with the political traditions and the economical needs of Canada. Kept within proper limits, it affords great advantages to our agriculture and to all the industries derived from the exploitation of natural resources, without threatening our commercial independence, our political autonomy and our attachment to the Empire.

REAL DANGERS TO AVOID

The general objections against reciprocity being removed, one is confronted with other arguments, of a more special character, the importance of which cannot be overlooked.

From the very conditions, just summarily indicated, which make for the advantage and even the necessity of a régime of reciprocity, real dangers may arise; and against those dangers Canadian statesmen must guard our country.

The two main sources of peril in that respect, Mr. Monk has clearly pointed out in his speech, of the 28th of January, through which he has sown, in so few words, the germs of so many thoughts.

First, there is the enslavement of our national economy under the predominance of American interests. That enslavement may be brought about through two different channels: the extinction of Canadian industries by the crushing competition of American trusts; and the buying-up of our natural resources by American capital for the benefit of American manufacturers.

Under reservation of the light which may be thrown upon the question by the debate in Parliament and the detailed study of the agreement, I have proved, I think, that, at first sight, the new tariff does not threaten Canada with that double-edged danger.

Second, the increase of trade between Canada and the United States may bring a decrease in the exchanges between Western and Eastern Canada; then, as a first result, the feeding of American means of transportation at the expense of Canadian avenues of trade, and eventually the gradual slackening of the relations, already so difficult to maintain, between the two vast regions divided by the great lakes.

AMERICAN RAILWAYS.

"J. J. Hill will get hold of our Western trade and ruin our means of transportation," such is the somewhat exaggerated argument used; and there is a good deal of truth in it.

But what is generally forgotten is that the source of evil was created long before the Reciprocity arrangement.

The primary cause is the incredible improvidence with which American railways were permitted to cross the boundary at any point, to operate their connexions with

Canadian lines, and to prepare themselves methodically to act as sucking-pumps on the wealthiest portions of Canadian territory.

My contention is not that all operations of this kind should be prohibited: it would be absurd—just as absurd as the idea of preventing all commercial intercourse between the two countries. But Parliament and the Government should have looked carefully into that work of absorption. They should have taken all the available means of securing the independence of Canadian lines and of regulating the traffic of the international ways of communication. And the authority of Parliament could have been exercised to that effect in many ways:—by looking after the capitalisation of railway companies, by limiting their powers, by localising properly their roads and terminals, by supervising their rates, etc., etc.

In 1902 or about so, if I remember right, I called the attention of the House of Commons to that danger. I even made a motion to that effect. One of the leaders of the Conservative party, Mr. Haggart, a former minister of railways, stretched out a helping hand to the Government. Mr. Fielding grasped it. And under their joint authority, the two parliamentary flocks united as one to turn my motion aside with disdain, in the name of the good old British and liberal principle of "*let go.*"

Among the heated patriots that I meet occasionally in my way, I could recall the physiognomies which, in my memory, are more or less confounded with those of the promoters of J. J. Hill's enterprises, so closely were they then congregated in and near the lobbies of Parliament. There are some still sitting in Ottawa, on both sides of the Speaker's chair.

Now that the Parliament of Canada has multiplied the means of communication between the two countries, has even subsidised several of those sucking-pumps, with-

out reserving to the authorities of Canada the means of preventing them operating to the detriment of Canadian interests, it will be hard work to convince the settlers of the West that those international railways have been constructed to be mere play-things for the Mormons, the Doukobors and the Galicians. People in the West innocently believe that Parliament has authorised or even helped in the construction of those roads in order to facilitate the expedition of their products upon the market thus placed within an easy reach; and they demand, with increasing energy, that they should get the full benefit of it.

THE GEORGIAN BAY CANAL.

There may still be a way to atone the evil.

The prophets of Imperialism see the end of the world in any measure of reciprocity; they foretell the conquest of Canada by J. J. Hill, its annexation to the United States and the disruption of the Empire. This may be the occasion to recall to their memory the wise foresight of Mr. Monk, when he suggested spending in the rapid construction of the Georgian Bay Canal the millions destined to the present and future *Niobes* and *Rainbows*.

They may find out before long that the "narrow" patriotism of the member for Jacques-Cartier and of the Nationalists was more clear-sighted and efficient than their own, more sincere and consistent than the patriotism of the new imperialists of the Laurier fashion.

"But," do they reply, "what is the use of constructing the Georgian Bay Canal if the whole of our wheat goes to the United States, if our trade is no more from West to East, but from North to South?"

This is a question which deserves some examination.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE.

When East-to-West or West-to-East trade is spoken of, a distinction must be made between home and foreign trade.

The home trade consists mainly in the exchange of manufactured articles from the East and natural products from the West.

The internal trade, and, consequently, the means of transportation through which it is done in Canada, will be affected by the agreement inasmuch only as the new tariff may let American products displace, on certain local markets in Canada, similar products grown or manufactured in other parts of Canada.

In that category may be placed the instances pointed out by Mr. Monk, Mr. McBride, the fruit growers of Ontario,—all cases which deserve the attention of Parliament.

But so far, it does not appear that many articles, either natural or manufactured, are thus affected by the Convention.

At all events, the home trade, with all the advantages accruing therefrom to the Canadian railways, is necessarily limited by the purchasing capacity of the Canadian people; it covers but a minor proportion of the industrial production in the East and a very small proportion of the agricultural production in the West. (1)

That trade will grow with the population and wealth of the country, and the constant care of Parliament guided by public opinion, should be to see that the customs tariff keeps to the Canadian producer and to our national avenues of trade the full benefit of that growth, and not to let the profit go to the foreigner, either American or British.

(1) This may be exaggerated. But the conclusion, I think, remains untouched.

FOREIGN TRADE; FREE TRANSIT; NAVIGATION.

But, for the time being, the main factor in the problem of transportation is the export trade.

Thanks to the bonding privilege, the American frontiers are already wide open and Canadian products freely shipped by American routes directly to Europe or from one point to another of the Canadian territory.

In the same way, our boundary is open and our roads accessible to American goods.

This seems to be forgotten by most of those who oppose, in good faith, not only the arrangement under discussion, but any proposal of reciprocity, as well. It is not to be presumed that any one, even Mr. Borden, would suggest the interdiction of free transit in bond.

Such interdiction would strike a heavier blow at the Canadian railways,—the C. P. R. and especially the G. T. R.—than at the Canadian Northern or the J. J. Hill system.

Even at the time of the least friendly relations between the two countries, no government on either side dared resort to such an extreme measure of retaliation.

This vital point leaves out of the scope of the argument,—just as in fact it withdraws from the effect of the tariff, both old and new,—not only the wheat exported in bond, but also the enormous quantity of products of all kind,—natural or manufactured, American or Canadian—which continually cross the boundary line for the benefit of the producers, the traders and the transporters of both countries.

To that fact must be added another which, on the one hand, strengthens the argument advanced by Mr. Monk in favour of the Georgian Bay Canal, but, on the other, weakens the plea of those who systematically oppose reciprocity.

The main portion of Canadian wheat sold in England is shipped through the great lakes and the St. Lawrence.

Up to the present time, our own railways have not succeeded in competing seriously, for that traffic, with navigation. This was one of the strongest arguments brought by Mr. Blair and, after him, by the Conservative opposition, against the construction of the eastern portion of the Transcontinental Railway. Is it likely that J. J. Hill's Railway System can succeed better in that way than the Canadian Pacific Railway?

I pass over the question of American traffic through the great lakes and the Erie Canal: that route is already free.

I stated above, as many others have done, that the denunciation of the treaty of 1854 stimulated in Canada energies of production and a search for new farming methods. Should the Convention of 1911 bring us to open our eyes on the superiority of our natural ways of transportation and to use them for all they are worth, that result alone would make it beneficent.

Upon that problem of the transportation of wheat, other cereals and flour, another fear has been expressed. It has been represented that the American mills must hereafter draw an enormous benefit to our detriment, because they will carry, in our stead, the foreign trade of flour made of Canadian cereals. A reply to that argument was given, in an interview which appeared in the columns of the *Montreal Star*, the very day after the announcement of the Convention. That interview was given by Mr. Thompson, manager of the O'Gilvie Milling Co., the most powerful of its kind in Canada and one of the most important in the world. According to Mr. Thompson's opinion, the situation would not be altered by the new arrangement; because the dreaded operation is carried on to-day under the system of rebates on duties, which is, after all, equivalent to the bonding privilege. That again is an important point which Parliament should make clear.

DID OUR REPRESENTATIVES DO THEIR DUTY BY CANADA ?

Is the arrangement the most advantageous which Canada could make ?

This aspect of the question should be carefully considered by parliament before the agreement is ratified.

Public opinion in the United States is changing rapidly over questions of protection and reciprocity. The movement in favour of a general scaling-down of the tariff is gaining ground daily. The advantage of easier relations with Canada is increasing in the eyes of the American people. That double tendency manifested itself with an extraordinary emphasis in the late congressional elections.

Would it not have been wiser to let the wave reach its crest at the presidential election and the partial renewal of the Senate, in 1912, and then to negotiate with a President, a Senate and a House of Representatives equally favourable to reciprocity and to a reduction in the tariff ?

It is not likely that Mr. Taft hurried the conclusion of an arrangement, lest more favourable conditions should be offered later on by an executive power and a Congress freer than he is from protectionists' influences ?

These very plausible questions were suggested by Mr. Monk in his speech at *Le Devoir's* banquet ; and our ministers should be forced to reply before the assent of Parliament and of the people be given to the bargain they have closed.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER CANNOT BE TRUSTED.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues should not wonder if serious doubts as to the firmness of their patriotism arise in honest, independent minds. In spite

of their proud declaration: "*We shall never go to Washington!*"—in spite of all their abjurations on the altar of Imperialism; in spite even of the *Rainbows* and the *Niobes*, the present government deserve no more the confidence of the Imperialists than the faith of the Nationalists.

The past of the Prime Minister, that of several of his colleagues, the variety or rather the variations of their national and economical doctrines, the absence or the renunciation of all principle—these are characteristics which may have given those gentlemen some success, but which breed, in time of crisis, neither devotion nor confidence.

In what spirit did the present Government carry on negotiations with the President of the United States? With what mentality will they supervise the operation of the reciprocity régime they are endeavouring to establish?

ANNEXIONIST INTRIGUES.

In recalling the numerous efforts made by the various governments, liberal or conservative, to revive reciprocity, after 1866, the Finance Minister has passed in remarkable silence, and for good cause, over the famous liberal campaign in favour of commercial union and unlimited reciprocity with the United States.

That ill-omened and dangerous propaganda lasted from 1887 to 1891. It caused the retreat of Mr. Blake, who rightly saw in it a round-about way towards annexation. The great jurist was not altogether opposed to annexation; but he thought it was disloyal and cowardly to lead the Canadian people in that direction while concealing the final issue. Mr. Laurier, less scrupulous on the needs of electoral tactics, accepted his succession and headed the campaign for reciprocity with the same absence of conviction and the same eloquence with which he has by turns served or fought all doctrines. The defeat of 1891 and, above all, the publication of Mr. Blake's famous letter explaining the motives of his definite retreat from politics,

brought to an end the public propaganda in favour of commercial union. But they did not prevent the secret conferences of 1892, chastely *ignored* by Mr. Laurier, and carried on, through Erastus Wiman's agency, between Messrs. Tarte and Mercier, on the one hand, and Messrs. Carnegie, Morton, Depew and other Americans, on the other side. I have related elsewhere how Goldwin Smith, an avowed annexationist, but who, like Edward Blake, lacked "practical sense", refused to share in the thirty pieces of Judas; and therefore the plot miscarried.

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To try and pass judgment upon the Convention, or to forecast its future consequences, either from the past or the principles of the men by whom it was concluded, would indeed be pure gambling.

The situation must be faced as it is at present; and due allowance being made for contingencies, anticipations should not be carried too far beyond the ground of actual and concrete facts.

If, on the whole, the arrangement is of sufficient advantage to both countries,—and this is essential to the success of any understanding of this nature;—if more favourable conditions cannot be hoped for in 1913;—then it seems to me that, from the exclusive standpoint of Canadian and American relations, the Convention should be ratified by the Parliament of Canada.

If, on the contrary, better conditions may presumably be secured from the next American Congress, what prevents the terms of the agreement being modified by Parliament, then inserted in our statute book, there to remain as a precise expression of the terms at which Canada is prepared to open her doors to American trade? Thus the Conservative Government proceeded in 1879.

This arrangement, it must be remembered, is not a treaty. Whatever secret engagements may have been taken

by our Ministers, either at Albany or at Washington,—and Mr. Fielding has not been clear on that point,—Canada is not bound to the terms or to any duration of the proposed arrangement. As far as Canada is concerned, it is a simple manipulation of her own tariff, which her own Parliament is at liberty to effect in whole or in part. It may likewise be repealed or amended at any time and in any way.

RECIPROCITY AND IMPERIALISM

Are British interests sacrificed by the agreement?

To give a proper answer, there must be first a clear understanding as to those terms: "*British interests*."

If interpreted at the light of history and tradition, I say: "NO"; and so much the better.

If what is meant by "*British interests*" is the conception of the Imperialistic school, I say: "YES";—and so much the better again.

BRITAIN'S RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES.

By the very terms of the entente, not only does the preference granted to Great Britain and other British possessions remain untouched; but on every point where that preferential tariff is higher than the one granted to the Americans, it is brought down to the same level; wherever it is lower, it remains there.

Moreover, all countries enjoying, under British treaties, the privilege of the most favoured nation clause, get the full benefit of the reductions made in the tariff in favour of the United States.

It cannot therefore be contended that the legitimate interests of Great Britain or her actual rights have not been safeguarded. The charge could rather be made that the Government have gone too far in that direction.

The disposition which I mentioned last night open the door to dangerous measures of retaliation on the part of

the British Government. However, the prudence and the tact of the London authorities may, I think, be relied upon. The British Government will not likely, without the assent of Canada, make use of that restriction, solely designed to cover existing treaties.

Finally, Canada implicitly preserves the liberty to look for commercial alliances everywhere, within and without the Empire, and to proffer to any country, British or foreign, advantages similar to those now granted to the United States.

So, in principle, Canadian autonomy and British interests are safeguarded. And this is amply sufficient in the opinion of all those who look upon freedom of action for the self-governing communities, who are the essential parts of the Empire, as the strongest Imperial bond.

A GOOD BLOW TO IMPERIALISM.

But, if, by "*British interests*", one means, according to the teaching of the Imperialistic school, the subordination of purely Canadian interests to the combined interests of the Empire, then, not only does the Convention make little of them; but it is certainly the most treacherous and effective blow which Sir Wilfrid Laurier has ever given to the cause of Imperialism, which he has heretofore so well served.

This explains the clamours which proceed from all the centres of Imperialism, both in England and in Canada. In the main, the most violent and serious objections coming from those sources bear neither upon the relative proportion of advantages mutually granted by each country, nor upon the danger to our industries and avenues of trade, nor again upon the predominance of the Western provinces:—I leave aside the arguments in which the *Montreal Star* has been prompted by Lord Grey on the preservation of the French language and the Catholic reli-

gion (!!) ;—they all bear on this point: Canada must not conclude with the United States,—or with any foreign country,—any arrangement that may prevent her binding herself commercially with Britain and the other British colonies.

In other terms, Canada must not exercise her free will and look to her own advantage in the choice of her commercial relations, which must be subordinated to Imperial interests.

Here lies the root of the question; and, as in the case of the Navy Law, the conflict is between the two principles: Autonomy and Imperialism.

Of Sir Wilfrid's new somersault and the advantage that may be gained therefrom, I will tell later on. Let us attend now to the opponents on principle.

MR. BORDEN AN IMPERIALIST

Mr. Borden deserves, this time, to be congratulated upon the clearness of his position. At last, it is possible to understand him. He places himself squarely on the ground of imperialism.

He thinks that Canada, instead of dealing with ninety million Americans, should make a treaty with three hundred million British subjects. Others, more sanguine, say four hundred and fifty millions.

On paper, it is splendid, it is even imposing. But the solution of those problems of trade is determined by other and more effective coefficients than the flag and numerical bulk of people.

What quantity of goods could Canada exchange with the three hundred million "British subjects" in East India, in Ceylon, in Hong-Kong, in the Settlements, in Egypt and the protectorates of Africa, or the innumerable Crown colonies scattered all over the world? To this

simple question, Mr. Borden, Lord Grey, Sir Hugh Graham and their organ, the *Star*, with its French edition, *La Patrie*, should give a comprehensive reply, to the satisfaction of the Canadian consumer and producer.

If all the British countries and peoples whom the inexorable laws of nature prevent from being our commercial allies were excluded, at least four out of five of the immense array of clients, which the imperialistic dream offers to Canada, would have to be discarded.

Brought down to a practical basis, it would leave us, apart from the Western Indies, little except the British Isles and their forty million inhabitants, who, so far, have always refused to consider the Canadians or any other group of British Colonials as trade partners.

AN IMPERIAL TARIFF.

The final object of the Imperialists is, as is well known, to encircle the whole Empire by an immense imperial tariff; and thereby force, through an artificial agency, the consummation of that partnership which the laws of nature, as well as true British traditions and interests, have heretofore prevented.

From the sole viewpoint of the relations between Great Britain and Canada, that policy would be more logical and more equitable, in principle, than the present one-sided preference. But would it fulfil the expectations of sincere Imperialists?

I do not think so, for reasons that I have frequently pressed forward and corroborated by opinions from the highest British authorities, the first being Mr. Chamberlain himself, the chief of the school. It is sufficient for the present to recall the most conclusive of those reasons.

Great Britain imports from all the parts of the world the largest portion of her food and of the raw material upon which her industries are kept up.

Through the free import,—a more accurate expression, in fact, than *free trade*,—of all such essential goods, she was able to create, for her own benefit, an enormous shipping trade, the decrease of which could hardly be compensated. No serious tariff reformer has ever, that I know, given a straight answer to that objection. With this feature of the case, however, Great Britain alone is concerned. I mention it simply as a further obstacle in the way of the imperialistic movement.

But what affects us directly is the line of argument used in England by Mr. Chamberlain and his disciples, in support of their theory of commercial union within the Empire, and in answer to their opponents who evoke the spectre of a higher cost of living.

ADVANTAGES FOR GREAT BRITAIN.

First, they start by promising to leave free from taxation all raw materials needed by British industries. Then they assert that the imposition of a duty upon foreign corn and other foodstuffs, with a rebate in favour of the colonies, will not raise prices, unless perhaps for a short period at the start. For, say they, the foreign producer shall pay the difference, either by accepting, willingly or unwillingly, a lower price of sale, or because foreign governments will make up for the difference by export premiums or other means. At any rate, they add,—and this is the important point,—under an imperial preferential tariff, a strong impetus will be given to agriculture in India, in the Upper Nile and in other parts of the Empire, now unproductive; so that, before long, the price of wheat and other foodstuffs *will be lower than before the enactment of an imperial tariff*.

This brings to my mind a doubt as to what will then be the "*Imperial sentiments*" of the Yankee, the Galician, the German, the Scandinavian, the Mormon, settled in the Western provinces, and even the loyalty of the Ontario

farmer, to whom the American market had been kept closed by force, in the name of Imperial unity, in order to bring them to sell their goods to their "brethren" of Britain at a cheaper price than now?

But let us go on with a further analysis of the imperialist theory, as preached in England.

Should the cost of living, say Mr. Chamberlain's followers, be somewhat higher, it would be compensated by a proportional raise in the salaries and incomes. For the colonies, in acknowledgement of the favour granted by the Imperial tariff to their natural products—(with the object of bringing down their prices!)—will restrict their industrial production and close their market to foreign goods in order to give to British manufactures a *permanent* market, the size and the profits of which shall for ever increase.

ADVANTAGES TO THE COLONIES. MUTUAL DUPLICITY.

At the same time, Colonials are told that the whole advantage will be on their side; that for the love of Empire and the sole purpose of making rich his "*brethren beyond the seas*", poetical John Bull is willing to tax his bread, his meat food, his wine and many other necessities of life.

In other words, to follow the happy exemplification used by Mr. Adam Shortt, the commercial union of the Empire is an arrangement by which *every one of the contracting parties expects the others to make all the sacrifices, while itself will reap all the benefits*. (1) Agreements of that nature seldom bring good results,—may it be said in spite of the pontiffs of the Board of Trade or the prophets of the Manufacturers' Association, who would be the first to howl if but one of their industries suffered by British competition, if one fourth of one per cent of their divi-

(1) "*Imperial Preferential Trade, from a Canadian point of view*", by Adam Shortt;—Toronto. Morang, 1904.

denda fell into the purse of the "brother" capitalist in London, or in the small dinner pail of the "cousin" labourer in Birmingham or Sheffield.

And it is in the name of a theory so false, so deceitful, so dangerous by the anti-national reactions that would spring from its application, that Canada is asked to renounce the freedom of her commercial alliances, one of the most essential forms of her autonomy! It is in the name of a system yet unborn, and conceived against all the laws of economy, that efforts are made to convince Canadian farmers and traders that they should never seek trade relations with their closest neighbours!

THE STRENGTH OF NATURAL LAWS.

It is inconceivable that sensible and practical men should so completely live out of the sphere of reality. They seemingly ignore the elements of Northern America geography, and forget that the political division of this continent has been made with an entire disregard for the laws of nature.

To the consequences of that situation, tariffs can oppose but a partial resistance. Not to shut the outlets, but, on the contrary, to open safety valves, is the safest way to prevent the extreme consequences, that is, the breaking of the national barrier between the two countries.

To throw the doors wide open to American trade, as, from 1887 to 1891, the liberals wished to do by commercial union and unlimited reciprocity,—still perhaps the silent dream of some of them,—is not to open the valve, but to batter in breach the protective wall, I mean "protective" in the broad sense of the word.

To shut all the doors, to attempt to put a stop to all commercial intercourse between the two countries, as wish the Imperialists at Mr. Borden's back, is to prepare violent reactions that would, in a near future, break the dyke.

To maintain solid the foundation of the breastwork, as Sir John A. Macdonald did, and to cut the necessary openings so as to let pass normal currents, as he endeavoured of frequent intervals to do, is the true national policy.

And to that policy, we, Nationalists, remain steadfastly attached.

Let then the veins of the whole Canadian people, from Halifax to Vancouver, be injected with a drop of nationalism; let Canada be imbued with faith in her destiny, and taught to develop her own inheritance; let her cease to expect from Britain or elsewhere the strength and the vitality which make great nations;—and the security of the Empire and the unity of Canada will be safe, should even the farmer of Quebec or Alberta sell a few more bushels of wheat and potatoes, or some dozens of eggs, in Boston or Chicago, or should he purchase one or two ploughs less from the Honourable Melville Jones, senator.

TARIFF AND NAVY

Let us now study the relation between commercial and military imperialism, in other words, between the tariff and the navy.

Imperialism is one, indivisible doctrine.

Too long, many Canadians, either French or English speaking, have, in good faith, thought it possible to accept of the doctrine what was convenient to them and to throw the rest away. Some meant, for example, to advocate the commercial union of the Empire and to spurn its political federation and the contribution to British wars foreign to Canada. This is the time or never to cast away that delusion, and to understand that, if Canada enters upon that path, she will be forced to follow the road to the end and to abide by all the consequences. Those consequences will be, first, a violent reaction arising from the instinct of self-government, and, in the end, the disruption of the Empire.

This I give as food for reflexion to the Quebec Conservatives, who, after having fought strenuously the Navy Law, might be tempted to follow Mr. Borden in the opposition he makes to reciprocity in the name of commercial union within the Empire.

Even if they thought that Canada might benefit by that alliance of trade, those who believe in Canadian autonomy should oppose commercial union. Otherwise, they would deserve the charges of "selfish meanness" and "narrow chauvinism" wrongly thrown at them by sincere or disguised imperialists.

IT MUST BE IMPERIALISM OR AUTONOMY.

We, Nationalists, wish the integral maintenance and the normal development of the principle of autonomy, with all its consequences. To its inconveniences we are prepared to submit just as squarely as we want to enjoy its advantages; and we are sincerely convinced that from the sole application of that principle, in all the spheres of national activity, shall arise the greatness of Canada and the maintenance, as long as it can last, of the bond which unites Canada to Britain.

On the other hand, we fully respect the sincerity of convinced doctrinal imperialists, such as Dr. Leacock, Colonel Denison or Mr. Meighen, who look for the material strength and the moral unity of Canada in a closer imperial bond, and who accept, as we do, the full consequences of their doctrine.

All we ask, is that the people of Canada shall choose, in full freedom of mind and conscience, between the two principles.

If the Imperialists triumph, we will not hoist, let it be well understood, the flag of rebellion. If the doctrine of autonomy is maintained, we dare hope that the sincere Imperialists will not burn Parliament and issue annexation.

nist manifestoes, as did the Loyalists of 1849, infuriated as they were by the fall of Canadian oligarchy and the repeal of preferential duties on Colonial wheat.

But if the Canadian people are to make a free choice, their eyes should be freed from the bandages with which opportunists of all schools and parties endeavour to blind them.

Why should the people of Canada be deceived as to the close and unbreakable relations which exist between commercial and military imperialism, or, to put my thought under a concrete form, between the Navy Law and Reciprocity?

CHAMBERLAIN'S DOCTRINE.

Here again, Mr. Chamberlain has proved to be the most courageous and the most logical of all the apostles of the doctrine.

In the pursuit of his ideal, he has tried one ground now, and now another, but he never loses sight of the goal.

He suggested, first, the creation of an Imperial Council; but the colonies remained indifferent, in spite of the alluring declarations made by Mr. Laurier, in 1897. Military imperialism received a formidable impulse from the South African war; but after the burst, a reaction followed.

"But I did not on that account give it up," declared Mr. Chamberlain, at Newcastle, in October 1903, "and I come back, therefore, to this idea of commercial union which will bring us together, which will necessitate the council, which council in time may do *much more* than it does in the beginning and may leave us, though it will not find us, a great, united, loyal, and federated Empire."

What he meant by "*much more*," Mr. Chamberlain has explained time and again: it is primarily and above

all the participation of colonies in all the imperial wars, which means a permanent contribution to the Imperial Army and Navy, or, in one word, military Imperialism.

In the eyes of the British Imperialists, that contribution alone would make up for all the sacrifices which the rate-payers of the United Kingdom could make for the cause of Empire by giving a preference on wheat and other foodstuffs from the colonies.

THE PROGRESS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

But, may it be objected, Chamberlain is off the stage, his policy has been rejected by the British electorate, his party has been defeated.

A deep mistake! True, the unionist party was defeated at the last elections. The physical person, if I may say so, of Mr. Chamberlain is no more there; his voice is silent; but vital as ever are the thoughts which his powerful intellect and his indefatigable energy have thrown broadcast. As he foresaw, the work of time, and perhaps his own withdrawal, were necessary to the germination of his ideal.

The unionist party, when in power, will accept Mr. Chamberlain's policy and apply it more fully than it was prepared to do when that remarkable man was in the fight.

Not only is the old conservative faction and Mr. Balfour himself more and more drawn by degrees into that policy; but even the radical party is gradually inoculated with its virus, to which, like our Canadian liberals, they oppose but incoherent resistances.

It would be interesting to discover how the Asquith government, largely composed of men heretofore opposed to Imperialism, first restrained Lord Grey's propaganda, then gave freedom to his conquering ardour in the preparation of the Navy Law, and finally helped, through the agency of their ambassador at Washington, Mr. Bryce, and without the knowledge of their official representative in

Canada, in hatching the Taft-Fielding Convention so as to have in their own hands a good card to play against the tariff reformers in Great Britain.

I may be in a position to write, one of these days, a chapter on that part of the game.

For the time being, I confine myself to following up the slow but gradual growth of Imperialism. I mark the finger posts of its road, and those which show the direction autonomists should follow in order to check the movement.

RECIPROCITY VERSUS IMPERIALISM.

Reciprocity with the United States gives us a strategic point of unmeasurable value. Should we not get hold of it? To realise the importance of the position, it is sufficient to follow the progress of the hysterical crisis through which the *Montreal Star* is passing, and to analyse the flow of arguments brought to bear against the reciprocity agreement by that journal and its French double, *La Patrie*.

Sir Hugh Graham designs anything but to throw Sir Wilfrid Laurier down and put Mr. Borden in his place. An ardent and convinced imperialist, he aims at becoming the Northcliffe of the Canadian press.

He raises the bugbear of annexation to frighten and stir up simple and nervous people, who are just as numerous among our fellow-citizens of British origin as they are with us.

Assuredly, he does not hold in such low esteem the loyalty and patriotism of his compatriots as to believe them ready to sell their British nationality for a few pieces of American gold!

He feigns to believe that the clap-trap into which, in his opinion, our ministers have fallen, is the work of Mr. Taft; that the good faith of Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been

taken by surprise; and, in the name of all British interests, he beseeches the Prime Minister to prevent Parliament from ratifying the agreement.

Yet he must know,—being, as he is usually, well posted on matters of Empire,—that this arrangement is as much the work of the Asquith Cabinet as that of Messrs. Taft and Fielding, of Messrs. Paterson and Knox. He to whom front and back doors are open, both at Westminster and Rideau Hall, cannot ignore that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was induced by His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington to put his foot into that hornets' nest of reciprocity, just as he was drawn by Lord Grey to the Navy Law.

But there is one point on which Sir Hugh Graham is not mistaken: it is when he sees in the Taft-Fielding arrangement the strongest obstacle to the commercial union of the Empire and, therefore, to its military and political federation.

Is it to be wondered that we, Nationalists, who oppose that policy, should be disposed to view with favour the obstacle in its way?

LORD MILNER'S AND LORD GREY'S OPINIONS.

If it were necessary to strengthen the logic of the situation, I could multiply the evidence.

It would be an easy matter to fill the columns of *Le Devoir* for a week with quotations of all kinds,—newspaper articles, interviews, expressions of opinion, not to mention the speeches just beginning to flow,—all going to prove that most of the Imperialists who condemn the *anti-imperialist* bearing of the Reciprocity Convention have approved the *imperialistic* principle of the Navy Law.

I content myself with one authority. It may be remembered that last year, Sir Wilfrid Laurier quoted Lord Milner's opinion in support of the tortuous way—a navy Canadian in time of peace and Imperial in time of war—

which he had chosen to bring Canada into the military coalition of the Empire. Now then, one of the first opinions transmitted to us by the British press is precisely that of Lord Milner, who condemns Reciprocity as opposed to Imperialism.

That eminent man has not spoken lightly. He is one of the highest pontiffs of the Imperialistic creed, and one of its most powerful apostles. It is neither the fate of the Canadian Pacific Railway nor that of the Massey-Harris Company which make him nervous. He is not in the slightest degree troubled with the situation of our fruit and vegetable growers. What his far-seeing vision has caught is the chisel's cut in the link of the chain which he has helped to forge with such perseverance under the direction of his two masters, Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes.

And what to say of his companion in arms, Lord Grey, no less remarkable than Lord Milner by his talent, his energy, and his constant and almost heroic devotion to the same political creed? To realise what Lord Grey thinks, one has only to read that article in the *Montreal Star*, to which Mr. Héroux has already replied in part. (1)

Whether Lord Grey has written, dictated or inspired the article, I do not know. But what I do know is that, not many years ago, His Excellency was using the same arguments, the same language and nearly the same words, to induce the episcopacy of the province of Quebec—the HIERARCHY, the nightmare familiar to Dr. Sproule and Mr. Barthe (of *La Vigie*)—to come to the rescue of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Brodeur and their *Niobes* in distress.

What I know also is that, not many weeks ago, "high influences"—higher than Mr. Lemieux, as may be said by the *World's* correspondent, Mr. Mosher, who has, in his

(1) See the "Star" of January 31st and "Le Devoir" of February 1st.

life, taken the measure of many men,—“high influences” were exerting themselves in Rome with a view to obtain an intervention of the Church authorities with the clergy of the province of Quebec, and to bring thereby to an end the work of nationalism and opposition to the Navy Law.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER'S SOMERSAULTS.

But, as good people may object in their amazement, how can you explain Sir Wilfrid's somersault, and what kind of faith can you have in the sincerity of his latest attitude?

The diametrical difference of the position assumed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, first on the defence of the Empire, and now on American reciprocity, is easily explained, apart from the high influences to which he has been subjected: that of Lord Grey on the Navy Bill, and that of Mr. Bryce on the reciprocity negotiations.

The Prime Minister, as I have stated on many occasions, is gifted with a political instinct and scent which amount to genius; but his clear-sightedness is not as keen as it was. He is paying the price of a too long enjoyment of power and a too persistent practice of opportunism.

He has lost contact with the people. The courtiers who surround him, even those that are faithful, the greedy who eat in his hand, the mercenaries who write in his organs, keep him misinformed on real popular currents.

He was first misguided in the persuasion that the mass of the English-speaking Canadians were up to the mark of the exalted and sincere Imperialists or of the titled parvenus whom he meets in the philistine circles; and he wrongly concluded that his Navy Law would be hailed with enthusiasm in the English provinces.

Another misapprehension, no less deep, had taken hold of his mind: he thought that his “dear compatriots”

and "his good old province of Quebec" would forever be led by the fetishism of his name and the allurements of patronage.

His western tour, the strong attitude of the Grain Growers and that of the Ontario Grangers, have opened his British eye. And the Drummond-Arthabaska blow has given him—may I be forgiven for such familiarity!—a French black-eye that killed the last vestige of his Imperial faith. Of this, he has kept but the necessary formulas to be still called "a great Imperial statesman" by good old John Dougall, whose orthodoxy, between ourselves, is not altogether safe. Did he not carry on, like others, in days gone by, his little campaign in favour of unlimited reciprocity?

SIR WILFRID MAY TURN AGAIN.

Let the movement for autonomy get stronger again, and Sir Wilfrid will give us a repetition of his beautiful chants against the "*vortex*", the "*crime*" and the "*sui-oide*" of militarism. (First representation, 1902.)

Let the wind turn again to commercial and political union with the United States; and then will appear a new edition, reviewed, corrected and augmented, of the speech in which the enticements of the British shilling were so completely overshadowed by the charms of the American dollar, and the political federation and commercial union of the Empire denounced with indignation because they might draw Canada into Britain's wars. (First edition, Boston, 1891.)

Let the storm of loyalty, raised by the reciprocity Convention, last two weeks or a month more; and Sir Wilfrid, by a noble move and through pure "love for England," might as well throw at the head of the Imperialists of the Manufacturers' Association a new reduction in the import duties upon British goods. To see how those ardent stan-

dard-bearers of Empire would meet the test thus imposed upon their patriotism would, I confess, afford some amusement. (1)

But, for the time being, the exasperated Imperialists, suddenly undeceived, bring Sir Wilfrid to account for all the earnest money he gave them in the past and all the praises they have thrown upon him on so many occasions.

In the "*nation builder*" of yesterday, in the "*silver tongued orator*" of old, they are not far from discovering the slippery tongued opportunist who has played with them as with every body else for the last ten years. That the discovery should turn to their mutual confusion is perfectly immaterial to me.

But out of that situation springs a wholesome teaching, that should warm the heart of honest people, because it bears a triumphant testimony to the strength of movements of opinion, when freed from party ties and proceeding from a good principle. When Mr. Monk denounced the Navy Bill and remained isolated with the faithful group that surrounded him, what disdain he drew upon him from the potentates of politics, of finance and of the press!

And during the whole time of our campaign of protest, in the columns of *Le Devoir* and on the hustings, how weak and insignificant we appeared in the eyes of thousands of people, in England and in Canada, who saw us only through the smaller end of the glass which organs of all shades, in both languages, drew upon us;—some of them supporting the Government, others, Mr. Borden, but most of them having organised against us the conspiracy of falsehood and the still more efficient one of silence.

(1) Since those lines were written, the "*Star*" has brought good evidence on this point by its second "*appeal to Sir Wilfrid Laurier*". In that article, dated February 13th, and as ludicrously pathetic as the first, the "*star*" warns Sir Wilfrid against the crime he would commit, in case he threw the patriotic manufacturer in a struggle between his imperial conscience and his Canadian purse.

On the other hand, with what care the movement of the Grangers of Ontario and of the Grain Growers in the West were minimised by the same powerful politicians and the same organs of public opinion! What efforts, what distortions, to convince the good Quebeckers, so placable by nature, that the agitation against the Navy, being confined to the province of Quebec, would amount to nothing unless it led Canada to a war between races and provinces!

THE DRUMMOND-ARTHABASKA ELECTION.

One election, in Drummond and Arthabaska, and one delegation to Ottawa, that of the Western farmers, were sufficient to throw both political camps into terror and disorder, and to leave trembling those who despised us so much a few months previous.

Last year, when Mr. Monk asked that the Naval Law be submitted to the people before coming into force, he carried but seventeen votes with him. This year, he forced Mr. Borden and the whole opposition to vote for a similar motion.

Last year, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, breaking his pledges of 1902 and 1907, succeeded in getting Parliament without a mandate to acknowledge the principle of the permanent contribution of Canada to Imperial armaments. This year, he trips up the Imperial scheme; and he attacks the policy on the very ground of commercial union upon which, in 1902, he declared himself ready to enter into negotiations with the other parts of the Empire.

Is the lesson clear enough? Let us, Nationalists and Autonomists from all parties, draw our forces together, make the fight closer and more vigorous than ever and repeat, upon all available occasions, the wholesome teaching of Drummond and Arthabaska! In the general contest as well as in the by-elections, let us send to Parliament as

many Gilberts as we can, that is, as many servants of the country in place of party slaves,—and soon, the Cabinet and Parliament, whether they follow Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Borden or any other Prime Minister, will soon be forced to repeal the Navy Law or at least to clear it from its imperialistic virus.

CONCLUSION

And now, to conclude, should the Convention be rejected or ratified?

Summing up the main objections that have been expressed against the arrangement, I proceed by elimination.

Does the principle of reciprocity in itself endanger the economy and the national unity of Canada? No.

Does the Convention threaten Canadian industry? No.

Does it threaten Canadian avenues of trade? No,—especially if the Georgian Bay Canal be built.

Does it threaten Imperial interests? No.

Does it throw an insuperable obstacle in the way of an Imperial customs union? Yes—and this is, in our eyes, the main reason for its adoption.

If I am told that this answer is dictated by the obsession of Imperialism, I reply that I have not looked for that basis of argument.

The very day that the terms of the agreement were made public, the leader of the opposition placed himself on the ground of Imperial interests. Why did he not remember that he was above all a member of the Canadian Parliament? That should he be to-morrow the chosen of the popular will, he would become, not a minister of the Empire, but the Prime Minister of Canada?

Mr. Borden's best excuse is that possibly and even probably the debate would have, in any case, driven in that

direction under the lead of the Imperialistic press of Great Britain and Canada.

ATTITUDE OF THE NATIONALISTS.

Nevertheless, I wish to emphasise this point:—the Nationalists cannot be charged, any more in this than in any previous occasion, with having lit the fire of discord. We were altogether prepared to look upon that agreement as a national problem: I stated so at the first, and I now come back to that ground.

This is a Canadian problem which should be solved by the parliament of Canada in the interest of the people of Canada.

If, upon the whole, the agreement benefits Canada, as it apparently does, it should be ratified by parliament with perhaps a few slight changes.

If through the debates in parliament, objections of a superior order arise, justifying the rejection or the suspension of the agreement, then let parliament reject or suspend.

But in one case or another, to the people of Canada alone has parliament to account for its actions. Whatever may be thought in London or Sydney, in Glasgow or Cape Town, whether the *Daily News* or the *Daily Mail* approves or not, whether Mr. Asquith, Lord Lansdowne or Mr. Balfour blames or praises, is of no concern to the parliament of Canada. If the new régime results in an increase of prosperity for Canada, the Empire will be benefited and the Canadian people more loyal than ever to the British Crown.

THE ANNEXATION BUGBEAR

Sir Hugh Graham thinks that the loyalty and the patriotism of the Canadians are up for sale and will be exported to the United States to be retailed on the markets

of St. Paul and the apostles. "Where the treasure is," says he, perverting the Sacred Text, "*there will the heart be also*". That such is the disposition in the circles whence the *Star* draws its inspirations, granted, and I take note of the confession. But that the majority of our English-speaking fellow-citizens should be so faint-hearted and ready to trade, with the first bidder, their British nationality, we Nationalists utterly refuse to believe. As with us, French-Canadians, we know it is false and therefore we feel safe.

Convinced as we are that the breaking of the Empire would soon follow the execution of the Imperialistic scheme and draw Canada in the way of Pan-Americanism,—opposed as we are to annexation, as deeply as the most ardent imperialists and more so than many of those who constantly parade their loyalty,—we see a safeguard precisely where Imperialists foresee or pretend to foresee the source of danger.

The feigned or sincere terrors of the believers in Imperial union have the less influence with us because the agreement does not bind the two countries in no way. Canada remains free to end or amend it the moment danger appears.

If, however, it was established during the debate in parliament, or by any other source of evidence, that the new tariff threatens grave peril to the economical prosperity and national unity of Canada, we would not hesitate to retrace our steps and to demand the rejection of the agreement.

The Convention being ratified, with or without our adhesion, should the future give reason to the Imperialists, should the dangers they foretell become manifest—be it next month, next year or ten years hence,—we would be the first to raise the cry of alarm and to demand its repeal or

its modification. In that fight, we would put the same energy and the same perseverance with which we have fought the Navy Law and every imperialistic measure.

Thank Heaven, the nationalists have proved that they can accomplish with some courage what they believe to be their public duty. This they have proved against obstacles that have hardened many hearts and paralysed many wills. Neither party spirit, the greed of power, a thirst for ill-gained popularity, self-love, the fear of ridicule nor the care of their personal interest, have so far stopped them.

They have proved already, and they may prove again, that their opposition to Imperialism, as well as any other article of their political programme, is entirely subordinated to their love for the Canadian land.

